savings schemes include Equity Linked Savings Scheme, 2005 and the Public Provident Fund established under Public Provident Fund Scheme, 1968. The necessary notifications in this regard have already been issued.

(c) and (d) No, Sir. Those investing in the PPF cannot invest up to rupees one lakh as the PPF Scheme provides for a ceiling of Rs. 70,000/- for investment in the said fund.

Tax concessions for Food Processing Industry

1427. SHRI LALIT SURI: Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether a delegation of Food Processing Industry met the Prime Minister in September and submitted a memorandum for tax concessions for the industry;

(b) if so, the details of the demands submitted by the delegation; and

(c) the action taken by Government so far thereto/proposed to be taken in the near future?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF FINANCE (SHRI S. S. PALANIMANICKAM): (a) to (c) The information is being collected and will be laid on the Table of the House.

Fiscal deficit of States

1428. SHRI B. J. PANDA: Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that the Prime Minister has expressed concern about the country's financial health and has asked for control over the fiscal deficit of the Centre and States;

(b) what is the current fiscal deficit and what are the reasons of its unabated rise; and

(c) what is the action plan of Government to control this deficit both at the Centre and in the States?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF FINANCE (SHRI S. S. PALANIMANICKAM): (a) Fiscal consolidation is an important objective of the National Common Minimum Programme of the Government. Prime Minister has on various occasions reiterated the need for fiscal prudence and macro-economic stability.

(b) The data on fiscal deficit of the Centre and States, and the combined deficit is given below:

Fiscal Deficit (as per cent of GDP)

	2002-03	2003-04	2004-05 (RE)	2005-06 (BE)
Centre	5.9	4.5	4.5	4.3
States	4.1	4.4	3.8	3.1
Combined	9.5	8.4	8.3	7.7

RE — Revised Estimates, BE — Budget Estimates
Data in respect of States are provisional from 2003-04 onwards
Source : Reserve Bank of India.

As is evident from the above, fiscal deficit has come down.

(c) Sustaining fiscal consolidation is a continuous process, which includes measures for increasing the revenue receipts (both tax and non-tax) achieving moderation in expenditure, particularly non-plan expenditure and adherence to the specified targets of fiscal responsibility legislations by the Centre and States.

Implementation of VAT

1429. SHRI ABANI ROY: Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state:

(a) what are the names of States/UTs which have adopted the new system of VAT as recommended by the Empowered Committee;

(b) whether some States/UTs have not so far published the schedule on VAT in leading newspapers; and

(c) if so, the reasons therefor and steps being taken in this regard?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF FINANCE (SHRI S.S. PALANIMANICKAM): (a) So far, 24 States/UTs have adopted VAT.